



## Meeting Summary April 7, 2021

### Attendance

Panel Members: Fred Marino, Chair  
Bob Gorman, Vice Chair  
Dan Lovette  
Vivian Stone

DPZ Staff: Anthony Cataldo, Nick Haines

Applicants and Presenters: Samer Alomar, Jacob Hickmat

**1. Call to Order** – DAP Chair Fred Marino opened the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

### **Review of Plan No. 21-03:** Kerger Pond Age Restricted Semi-Detached Homes, Ellicott City MD

Owner/Developer: The Estate of Thomas Charles O'Connor  
Engineer: Mildenberg Boender and Associates Inc.

### **Background**

The 8.35 acre site is zoned R-20 (Residential: Single) and is comprised of Parcel 497; with access to Kerger Road. Age Restricted housing is permitted in R-20 zoned properties with the approval through a conditional use hearing. The proposed use will be subject to the requirements established in the Howard County Zoning Ordinance for age restricted housing. The property currently contains one single-family residence, detached garage, barn and sheds. The property contains a farm pond, wetlands, stream and forest. The surrounding neighboring properties are single family residential. There is forest encumbered with a forest conservation easement that borders the property on the eastern edge.

### **Applicant Presentation**

The applicant presented the plans for the Kerger Pond Project which proposes the construction of 15 age restricted semi-detached residential buildings, each containing 2 units. The 30 units are constructed around a private road entered from Kreger Road that generally runs through the center of the property and terminates in a cul-de-sac. A proposed 600 square foot community center is located at the entrance to the development. The remaining area will contain open space and amenity area with the environmentally sensitive areas located on the northern edge undisturbed. The proposed project will also include a walking trail and outdoor seating and eating areas. Primary access for all 30 units will be provided with a new public road off Kerger Road.

The proposed semi-detached buildings contain tow units that are each 28 feet by 52 feet. Each unit will have an approx. 3000 to 3500 net square feet, will be 2 stories tall with an optional basement. The structures will be of a universal design and the proposed massing is based on the surrounding building to help the project match the surrounding neighborhood. Plantings are proposed to screen the

proposed development from adjacent properties. Stormwater management will be addressed on site by utilizing on site micro-bioretenement facilities.

### **Staff Presentation**

Howard County zoning regulations require DAP review of all conditional use, Age-Restricted Adult Housing (ARAH) projects. DAP review and recommendations are one step in the conditional use petition and the subsequent land development review process. The hearing examiner will consider DAP recommendations when reviewing the conditional use petition and will ultimately decide to approve, deny, or approve the petition with conditions. Staff will take into account the criteria the hearing examiner must consider when evaluating a conditional use petition for age restricted housing on a R-20 zoned parcel:

*The landscape character of the site must blend with adjacent residential properties. To achieve this:*

*(a) Grading and landscaping shall retain and enhance elements that allow the site to blend and be compatible with adjacent residential development.*

*(b) The project shall be compatible with adjacent residential development by providing either:*

*(i) An architectural transition with buildings near the perimeter that are similar to neighboring dwellings in scale, materials and architectural detail as demonstrated by architectural elevations or renderings submitted with the petition, or*

*(ii) Additional buffering along the perimeter of the site, through retention of existing forest or landscaping, enhanced landscaping, berms or increased setbacks.*

Staff requested the DAP evaluate and make recommendations on the orientation, layout, and configuration of the site plan and asked if the proposed configuration and layout of the proposed semi-detached buildings fit with the context of the residences in the existing neighborhood. Staff also asked the DAP to evaluate if the proposed streetscape design adequate for the development. Staff also requested recommendations on the proposed architecture, amenity space, and any elements of connections to consider including to tie into the surrounding neighborhood.

### **DAP Questions and Comments**

#### Site Design

DAP expressed concern with the number of units on the site and commented that it doesn't seem to fit within the context of the existing community and may not be meeting the intent of the Zoning code. DAP commented that the project seems too dense within the context of the neighborhood. DAP suggested that moving forward the applicant should provide photographs and elevations from Kerger road to show how the proposed development will fit within the existing community. DAP commented on the layout of the site and asked if a less condensed and cramped layout that utilized more of the property was investigated.

DAP commented that the clubhouse location at the front of the site may not be the most beneficial location for the community as a whole. DAP suggested placing it in a more central location on the site to better benefit the community. The applicant responded that they had been investigating scenarios where the community center was located at the center of the property it however pushed them into a townhome layout where the units were clustered in groups up to 4. The applicant said they opted for the semi-detached duplexes with the community center in the front in lieu of rows of townhomes along the southern border in their previous layout. DAP responded that the community center could be a more substantial amenity and, if centrally located, could be larger and take better advantage of the existing pond. DAP also suggested a potential outdoor patio for outdoor seating that could be attached to the clubhouse and that additional trails that embrace the overall site and pond should be investigated.

DAP suggested expanding the walking path to 6 feet to allow for people to pass easier while walking. DAP also wanted to verify the driveway lengths as a lot of the residents and visitors would be parking in the driveways. The applicant responded that the driveways are 20 feet long at a minimum.

DAP also suggested having the units 1 and 30 have their front entrances face Kerger Road but to maintain the garage access to the private street. This would help the proposed frontage to be more in line with the adjacent communities.

#### Landscape

DAP recommended the applicants add some shade trees along the streetscape as none were shown on the provided concept. The applicant responded that they will be providing plantings along the roadway and on site in accordance with the County Regulations. The applicant further stated that they were providing more landscaping than is required and had taken into account the community requests for elements such as evergreens. It was also mentioned that the Stormwater Management needs additional details to be evaluated.

#### Architecture

DAP commented on the various ages and architectural styles of homes in the surrounding community and suggested that it be studied and included with the next submission and presentation. DAP commented that the architecture of the proposed units fits within the community and should reflect similar characteristics.

DAP also commented that the proposed homes seem monotonous and commented that additional details such as shutters around the windows would add articulation and interest. DAP also asked why with the duplex units only one house got the covered portico or front entrance. DAP suggested revising the building models to both include the covered entrances to keep them even. The applicant responded that they would be looking into updating the homes. The DAP also commented on potentially adding a deck or extension off of the great room for each unit to add an outdoor element to the homes for the owners to enjoy the proposed rear yards.

DAP commented that the scale of the homes seemed large and spaced very close together for the site, and that they gave the feeling that the site was crowded. It was suggested that smaller units would make the site feel more livable. DAP also questioned that for the 55 and older development are the proposed 3-bedroom units necessary and is there any ramp access proposed for the units. The applicant responded that they would address that moving forward.

DAP commented on the scale of the structures and noted that 3500 square feet of living space seems excessive. DAP recommended investigating multiple sizes of units and making sure the proposed sizes are clear moving forward. DAP suggested the applicant consider moving forward with the architecture to not include too many different elements to make sure the neighborhood appears cohesive.

### **DAP Motions for Recommendations**

DAP member Vivian Stone made the following motion:

For the applicant to come back with a plan that shows alternate unit sizes or smaller unit sizes

DAP Chair Fred Marino seconded.

Vote: 4-0

DAP Vice Chair Bob Gorman made the following motion:

That the applicant considers eliminating Units 21 & 22 to use that space for a community center that meets the code and provides an outdoor recreational area and providing a landscape plan that shows street trees up and down all of the private road.

DAP member Dan Lovette seconded the motion.

Vote 4-0

DAP Member Vivian Stone made the following motion:

For the applicant to provide outdoor space in the backyards for each unit.

DAP Vice Chair Bob Gorman seconded.

Vote: 4-0

DAP Chair Fred Marino made the following motion:

For the applicant to study the plan in great detail, even after a reduction in the size of all or some of the units and reducing the quantity of the units to make it more concurrent with the neighborhood.

DAP Vice Chair Bob Gorman seconded.

Vote: 4-0

DAP Chair Fred Marino made the following motion:

For the applicant to take another look at the overall site layout and to better embrace the existing pond amenity for the entire neighborhood.

DAP Vice Chair Bob Gorman seconded.

Vote: 4-0

DAP Chair Fred Marino made the following motion:

For the applicant to take a look at the adjacent variety of architecture to make sure the proposed homes are fitting into that vernacular.

DAP Vice Chair Bob Gorman seconded.

Vote: 4-0

DAP Member Dan Lovette made the following motion:

For the applicant widen the proposed walking trail from 5 feet to 6 feet.

DAP Chair Fred Marino seconded.

Vote: 4-0

DAP voted for revised plans to be submitted for review.

## **2. Other Business**

DPZ noted no other business on the agenda.

## **3. Call to Adjourn**

DAP Chair Fred Marino adjourned the meeting at 8:06 p.m.